



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney
District of New Hampshire

Federal Building
55 Pleasant Street, Room 352
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

603/225-1552

MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, June 8, 2006

Contact: Thomas P. Colantuono
United States Attorney
Mark S. Zuckerman
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(603) 225-1552

OVER ONE TON OF MARIJUANA SEIZED
IN NEW HAMPSHIRE AND MASSACHUSETTS

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE – United States Attorney Tom Colantuono reports that on May 20 and June 6, federal, state, and local authorities intercepted and seized two shipments of marijuana totaling about 2,300 pounds. The seizures occurred in New Hampshire and western Massachusetts.

In May, Customs and Border Protection agents of the Department of Homeland Security at the United States-Mexico border crossing in Laredo, Texas intercepted a tractor trailer loaded with marijuana that had crossed the border from Mexico. The drugs were concealed in a shipment of hundreds of pieces of ceramic pottery. Shipping records showed that the truck was bound for New Hampshire. Immigration and Customs Special Agents conducted an undercover operation which facilitated the delivery of the trailer and its cargo to New Hampshire. Following directions the agents received from the intended recipient of the shipment, the agents delivered the marijuana laden pottery to an area off Puzzle Lane in Newton, New Hampshire on May 20.

Later that evening, agents observed 55 year-old John Bannon of Rowley, Massachusetts arrive at the site and leave with one of the ceramic pieces containing marijuana. Bannon was arrested and later charged with possession with intent to distribute 100 kilograms or more of marijuana. A search of all of the pottery revealed that it contained about 1,600 pounds of marijuana.

On Tuesday, agents intercepted and seized a second truckload of marijuana in western Massachusetts. This shipment also originated in Mexico and contained about 700 pounds of marijuana contained in several hundred bags of a concrete additive. This shipment appears to be related to the earlier truckload.

This investigation is being conducted by Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the New Hampshire State Police, the Massachusetts State Police, and the Newton, New Hampshire Police Department. The investigation is continuing and additional arrests may be forthcoming. This matter is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Mark S. Zuckerman.